



Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching

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News Release

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Local Teacher Recognized for Outstanding Teaching Innovation

Science Teacher from Mountain View High School Selected as 2005 Presidential Award State Finalist

Awardees Announced in March 2006

Washington, DC – Did your teacher ever take you to a theme park or use a model of a rollercoaster to teach physics concepts in class, allow you to learn fractions and angles by building a gingerbread house, or measure force and motion on the basketball court? Highly qualified science and mathematics teachers bring these types of lessons to life for their students. One of these remarkable teachers, John Madden, a Science teacher at Mountain View High School in Tucson, is being rewarded for his success in using innovative methods and strategies in his classroom. Madden has been named a state finalist for the 2005 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST), the nation's highest honor for K-12 teaching in these fields.

Established by Congress in 1983, and administered for the White House by the National Science Foundation, the Presidential Awards allow for each state to select up to three mathematics and three science teachers as state finalists. From this field of state finalists, a maximum of 108 Presidential Awardees are selected representing the 50 states and four U.S. jurisdictions. Recipients of the 2005 Presidential Awards will be announced during a week of celebration events in March 2006 in Washington, DC.

When Madden was told he was a state finalist, he said, "I felt apprehensive and a little guilty because I didn't know if I was really that good. I am fortunate that three of my early mentors in science education were all Presidential Award winners from Arizona."

Madden is one of the 253 state finalists for the prestigious Presidential Award. His teaching style is key to his success in the classroom. "I serve as a facilitator to my students in the learning process. My chemistry classes are set up as a self-paced program with mastery-level requirements. The students are required to structure their own learning schedule and they are the ones who determine when they are ready to be assessed on the material," said Madden. "I tend to work with small groups of students as they encounter difficulty with the material. I try to create an atmosphere where students feel very comfortable in expressing their thoughts and ideas."

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“Presidential Awardees represent exceptional professional models of what we are looking for in science and mathematics teachers. They are highly qualified in their fields, deeply knowledgeable about their subjects, and equipped with the methods and strategies that improve teaching and learning in science and mathematics,” said Celeste Pea, Ph.D., Program Director of Elementary, Secondary, and Informal Education programs at the National Science Foundation. “They strive to provide opportunities for their students to reach their potential in their respective schools and communities. Through this recognition, we hope to motivate similar creativity in other teachers, and to attract new recruits to the mathematics and science teaching profession.”

“I feel it is extremely important for society to have a scientifically-literate population. I derive a great deal of pleasure and satisfaction in helping my students see the application of science in their lives and the opportunities to pursue careers in science,” said Madden when asked about why he became a teacher.

The goal of the Presidential Awards is to identify and recognize highly qualified teachers. As part of the recognition process, Awardees will take part in a weeklong series of networking and professional development activities in Washington, DC. In addition, each Awardee will also receive \$10,000 from the National Science Foundation. For more information about PAEMST, see forms and instructions available at: www.paemst.org.